

## *Ethics Basics*

Public service is a public trust. Each servicemember and DoD civilian employee has a responsibility to the United States Government and its citizens to place loyalty to the Constitution, laws and ethical principles above private gain. To ensure that every citizen can have complete confidence in the integrity of the Federal Government, each servicemember and employee shall respect and adhere to the principles of ethical conduct stated below and in implementing standards contained in 5 C.F.R. 2635 and in the Joint Ethics Regulation, DoD 5500.7-R.

The following general principles apply to every servicemember and employee:

- (1) Public service is a public trust, requiring servicemembers and DoD civilian employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws and ethical principles above private gain.
- (2) Servicemembers and DOD civilian employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.
- (3) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.
- (4) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall not, except as permitted by Subpart B of 5 C.F.R. 2635, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.
- (5) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.
- (6) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.
- (7) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall not use public office for private gain.
- (8) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.
- (9) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall protect and conserve

Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

(10) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.

(11) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.

(12) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those-such as Federal, State, or local taxes-that are imposed by law.

(13) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

(14) Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or the ethical standards set forth in this part. Whether particular circumstances create an appearance that the law or these standards have been violated shall be determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts.

*This fact sheet is provided for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for consulting with your ethics counselor. To speak with an ethics counselor, please contact the Northern Law Center-SHAPE.*

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